

HOST: The General Mills Radio Adventure Theater!

MUSIC: THEME AND UNDER

HOST: I'm Tom Bosley welcoming you aboard the very latest and greatest twentieth century time machine --

RADIO -- which in the space of a few seconds can transport you backward or forward two or three centuries! Today, our time machine swings back more than two hundred years and stops in America in the early summer of 1744 -- an America where the forests were still green, the rivers clean, and there were no states -- only colonies, talking and thinking of rebellion -- and war.

CARDIGAN: I am a man. Measure me, Captain Butler! I'm almost as tall as you can now, free from your schoolroom, it's time for us to settle what lies between us.

BUTLER: Master Cardigan, because the threat of war has forced Sir William to remove you from my classroom doesn't alter the fact that you're a sixteen-year-old boy and your blood would do nothing for my honor.

CARDIGAN: That is an insult you can answer with any weapons you choose.

BUTLER: Patience, Master Cardigan! A year makes a difference. In a year I may meet you on the field of honor and kill you..

MUSIC: THEME TWO

HOST: Today's adventure was written especially for
the General Mills Radio Adventure Theater by
Murray Burnett and stars. _____

I shall be back shortly with Act One.

COMMERCIALS

MUSIC: THEME AND UNDER

HOST: The mansion of Sir William Johnson, first
Commissioner for Indian Affairs for His Majesty
King George the Third- stands today in Johnstown,
New York, with hatchet marks in the solid mahognay
bannisters. They were left by friendly, playful
Indians who visited the house of the only white man
they trusted. This mansion was the home of Michael
Cardigan, Sir William's sixteen-year-old ward. On
this day in 1744, Michael Cardigan studied under
the tutelage of Sir William's secretary, Walter
Butler. Sir William looked very grave.

SIR WILLIAM: Look around you, Michael.. everywhere we see the
clouds of war! Right here in Johnstown itself
the people are torn.. torn between loyalty to the
King and love of this great new country.

MICHAEL: But sir, the colonists speak of rebellion...
rebellion against the King. Surely...

SIR WILLIAM: (ANGRILY) Surely His Majesty has been badly
advised... his counselor lead him along a ruinous
path! A path which has brought these colonies
to the very brink of rebellion! Therefore I feel
it's best for you to take your place with all of
us outside the classroom.

MICHAEL: What place is that, sir?

SIR WILLIAM: A place I think you'll like, Michael! But I leave for Castle Cumberland in half an hour. When I return in two days time, you'll know the place I have chosen for you.

MUSIC: BRIDGE AND UNDER

SOUND: COUNTRY NOISES

MICHAEL: Released from my studies, I wandered in the fields thinking about what Sir William had planned for me. The warm day and light breeze must have made me drowsy because suddenly I was aware of a strange presence in the meadow. I realized with a cold, tight feeling in my chest that the 'presence' was an Indian .. a strange Indian. He was, I saw, an Iroquois and a Cayuca, but he was different from the Cayugas I knew. He was dusty and bloody, his eyes burning with privation and sunk deep in his head. As I came near him, he dropped his rifle into the hollow of his left arm and raised his right palm towards me.

QUIDER: Peace. I come in peace.

MICHAEL: Then brother, lay your rifle at your feet.

QUIDER: the dew is heavy and will damp my priming. I have no blanket on which to lay my weapon. I bear belts for Chief Warragh, he who unites people.

MICHAEL: You bear belts and ask to see Chief Warragh.
You speak of peace, yet your pouch is full of
little red war sticks.

QUIDER: The young man knows our signs... here.. I drop
my gun.

SOUND: SMALL DULL THUD OF RIFLE ON GRASS

MICHAEL: (A SMALL BEAT) Bearer of belts, take your rifle
and follow me.

MUSIC: BRIDGE AND UNDER

MICHAEL: I took him past the sentry, through the guard room and into Sir William's guest room. The dull fire that a fever kindles flickered behind the Indian's deep-set eyes. I sensed he felt he'd been led into a trap. Before I could move he was at the door, fighting savagely to get past the sentries who barred his way.

SOUND: SCUFFLES

QUIDER: (WITH STRAIN, OVER SOUND) Ho! Ho! Out!

MICHAEL: (SHOUTING) Fall back, sentries! Fall back! Cayugas are free people; free to stay, free to go. Open the door for my brother who fears his brother's fireside!

SOUND: STRUGGLES OUT...DOOR OPEN

MICHAEL: Bearer of belts...you are free to leave.

QUIDER: (BEAT) Young brother, my name is Quider..which in your language means...

MICHAEL: Peter.

QUIDER: (GRAVELY) True! You know I seek Chief...

MICHAEL: Chief Warragh is away at Castle Cumberland. He is expected back before moonrise tomorrow.

QUICER: I trust you. I shall stay.

MICHAEL: Then I bid my brother welcome. I will have his fire kindled, and see to his food and blankets so that he may sleep in peace behind doors that open at his will.

MUSIC: BRIDGE AND UNDER

MICHAEL: I awaited Sir William's return with anxiety. I wasn't sure I'd done the right thing with the Indian, Quider. I also was curious about the surprise he said he had in store for me, so it was with mixed feelings that I heard he had returned from Castle Cumberland and was waiting for me in his study.

SIR WILLIAM: Come in, lad, come in...don't hang about in the doorway.

MICHAEL: I'm sorry, sir, if I did the wrong thing. You've taught me that once a guest has been admitted, he should never be questioned or talked with until he's eaten and slept!

SIR WILLIAM: Michael, I'm proud of you, lad...from the reports I've had you did splendidly! I'm more certain than ever that I did the right thing by taking you out of the classroom and.. (HE LETS IT HANG)

MICHAEL: And, sir?

SIR WILLIAM: And obtaining his commission for you as officer in the Royal Border Regiment.

SOUND: LIGHT BOX BEING PLACED ON DESK

SIR WILLIAM: And here in this box is your uniform and your pistols.....(A BEAT) Well, Michael? Are you struck dumb that you stand there with mouth and eyes agape?

MICHAEL: (ABSOLUTELY OVERWHELEMED) Oh sir.. I.. it's.. it's everything I've ever dreamed of. I have no words to express my....my...the word 'thanks' is

(MORE)

MICHAEL: (CONT'D) too small; but I make you this vow, sir.
I shall try to be worthy of it.

SIR WILLIAM: I'm sure you'll be more than worthy, Michael, and
to show you my further confidence I'm asking you
to be with me when I talk with this Indian,
Quider.

MICHAEL: May I wear my uniform?

SIR WILLIAM: (WITH A LAUGH) There'll be time enough for that,
lad. But I wish to see him almost immediately and
Michael, I must have your promise to listen closely
but to tell no one what this belt bearer has to
say. My honor is at stake!

MICHAEL: You have my promise, sir.

SIR WILLIAM: Good. (CALLING) Send the belt bearer in.

MUSIC: STINGS AND UNDER

MICHAEL: When Quider entered the room I was truly awed by
his splendid presence as he stood Sir William
proudly, and glanced around the room with his
feverish eyes. Then Sir William spoke.

SIR WILLIAM: My brother comes alone. It is Cayuga custom to
send three messengers with each belt. Does my
brother bear but a fragment of one belt? Or does
he think us of so little importance that he comes
without attendants?

QUIDER: I bear three belts. Nine of my people started
from the Ohio. I alone live. And as for your
importance, Chief Warragh...for no other man in
America would we make the journey because you alone
we trust.

SIR WILLIAM: I think you and I mourn your loss.

QUIDER: Thank you. Now our fireplace is clean; the clouds have lifted and we may talk as true brothers! With this belt of seven rows we report the unhappy oppression of our brethren by the colonial military..men under the command of a Colonel Cresap. That is the reason we are here. We have now spoken with this belt.

SIR WILLIAM: (GRAVELY) I hear.

QUIDER: And with this black and white belt, we ask Chief Warragh, what are we to do? Lord Dunmore will not hear us. Colonel Cresap and his men, to whom we have done no harm, are clearing the forest and cross our free path. Instead of polishing our knives we come to you. Instead of joining painted war belts with our kin, the Mohawk and Oneida, we come to our brother here and ask you what is left for us to do? You have taught us there is a God. Show us he is a just God by this black belt of five rows.

SOUND: WAMPUM BELT THROWN ONTO TABLE, THEN

MUSIC: STINGS AND UNDER

MICHAEL: Knowing the Indians regarded hasty replies with suspicion, I wasn't surprised when Sir William promised Quider an answer within two days; but I was astonished at the savagery of my guardian's reaction after Quider left the room.

SIR WILLIAM: Cresap is a fool to go meddling with the Cayugas ...in their own lands held by them in solemn covenant! Does the fool want a border war added to the troubles now between King and colonies?!

MICHAEL: But sir, does Colonel Cresap's commander, Lord Dunmore, know about this?

SIR WILLIAM: Lord Dunmore!! That governor of Virginia may be playing some deep game, Michael! I suspect.. (HE STOPS) It doesn't matter what my suspicions are! If Quider's fever worsens, he'll be too ill for me to give him his answer. Meanwhile this madman, Cresap, is turning the Indians against the colonies by his foolish pranks on the Ohio.

MICHAEL: Isn't Cresap's very blindness and folly throwing the Indians into our arms, as allies?

SIR WILLIAM: (A BIG BEAT) Michael..when this war comes, as I fear it will, choose which cause you'll embrace and stand by it to the end.

MICHAEL: Sir, we serve the King, do we have any choice?

SIR WILLIAM: Lad, the English hay smells sweet, but not so sweet as the Mohawk Valley hay, to me. This is a sweet land and we've had too much of war. As for me, I feel God would not let me live to ask me to choose between the King, who has honored me, and my own people, in this dear land.

MUSIC: BRIDGE AND UNDER

MICHAEL: I was stupefied by what my guardian had just said. I had never entertained doubts about where our loyalties lay. But it seemed that Sir William had. However, I had little time to puzzle this out because a great gathering of loyal militia here at Johnstown coincided with the visit of Lord Dunmore the governor of Virginia and the night of a great ball.

SOUND STATELY MINUET DANCE MUSIC, B.G. SOFT CONVERSATION.

SIR WILLIAM: Michael! Michael?

MICHAEL: Sir William?

SIR WILLIAM: How goes it at Quider's lodge? Has the fever abated?

MICHAEL: Not yet, sir, but the doctor's hopeful.

SIR WILLIAM: The news could be worse, I suppose...but come along lad. This is the first time I've seen you in your uniform and you look a proper officer.

SIR WILLIAM: (CONT'D) I'll have you as aide when I speak with my Lord Dunmore.

MICHAEL: (PROUDLY) Thank you, sir.

SIR WILLIAM: Come along, then...this way....

SOUND: (B.G. NOISE FADES DOWN...KNOCK ON DOOR.)

DUNMORE: (MUFFLED) Come in! Come in!

SOUND: DOOR OPEN ON

SIR WILLIAM: Captain Butler! Good evening.

BUTLER: (LEVELLY) Good evening, Sir William.

DUNMORE: (OFF) Close the door, Butler, close it.

BUTLER: (STILL PASSIONLESS) I was not aware that Mister Cardigan was to be here.

SIR WILLIAM: Michael Cardigan has my confidence, and it's time he should know something of what passes in his own country.

SOUND: DOOR CLOSE...SHUTTING OUT B.G. SOUNDS OF DANCE

DUNMORE: (FADING ON) At sixteen I knew a thing or two, I'll warrant you, Sir William.

SIR WILLIAM: (DRYLY) Doubtless, milord. But now I am here to talk with you concerning our show of force here. I say, with all respect and submission, that I don't believe it will produce the sobering effect on the discontented in New York and Boston that you foresee.

BUTLER: (FLAT) Add our Mohawak Indian friends to the militia, then, Sir William.

DUNMORE: Add the whole six Nations, eh Captain Butler?

BUTLER: (FURIOUS, BUT CONCEALING IT) Sir William would be better able to answer that question, y Lord Dunmore and I don't think he....

SIR WILLIAM: (SMOOTHLY) Thank you, Captain Butler. I have said openly Milford, that if war must come between England and these colonies, let it be what it surely is....a white man's war

DUNMORE: And what would we do with the Indians, eh?

SIR WILLIAM: Milord, I am His Majesty's Intendant of Indian Affairs In North America. I shall see to it that the Indians remain neutral and if there are those who want the Indians as allies, I say it's a monstrous thing! You, Captain Butler, know something of border war. Can you propose to loose these Indians on the people of our colonies?

BUTLER: To prevent them from turning on us...Yes!

SIR WILLIAM: You don't know the colonists, Mister Butler, You think to buy their loyalty with tuppence worth o'tea.

DUNMORE: Sir William, you talk like a Boston preacher, I swear....

SIR WILLIAM: (DEADLY) Have done, sir!

DUNMORE: (A BEAT) My apologies.

SIR WILLIAM: Accepted. And now, milord, it has come to my knowledge that certain unauthorized people are tampering with a distant tribe of my Cayuga Indians. I want to serve notice that I shall do all in my power to protect my Cayugas from unlawful aggression.

DUNMORE: Sir William, do you mean to accuse me?!

BUTLER: (SMOOTHLY, BUT WARNINGLY) Milord, may I warn you.

DUNMORE: No Captain Butler you may not!

BUTLER: It will do nothing but harm to tell...

DUNMORE: To tell Sir William that I was not the one who set Cresap on! I never set him on.

SIR WILLIAM: (SARCASTIC) I certainly trust Your Lordship to understand there's no way I could harbor suspicions that you incite my Cayugas to attack white men, so I trust Your Lordship will recall Colonel Cresap and deal with him severely.

DUNMORE: No I won't, Sir William...

SIR WILLIAM: Then I wish your Lordship good night.

DUNMORE: Open the door for them, Butler.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS ON WOOD... THEN DOOR OPENS.

SIR WILLIAM: Captain Butler, I shall no longer require your services as my secretary. Will you kindly hand your keys to me?

BUTLER: At your command, Sir William.

SOUND: KEYS JANGLING

SIR WILLIAM: Mr. Butler I also withdraw my ~~consent~~ to your union with my kinswoman, Miss Felicity Warren.

BUTLER: As to that, I shall take my chances. Good night Sir William.

MUSIC: BRIEF BRIDGE AND UNDER

MICHAEL: As Captain Butler closed the door behind us I was rigid with rage. I walked along side Sir William only biding my time to return to Butler and have it out with him for the last time.

SOUND: MUSIC AND OTHER PARTY B.G. NOISES FADE BACK IN

MICHAEL: I, too, shall say goodnight, Sir William.

SIR WILLIAM: Where are you off to?

MICHAEL: I have a certain score to clean off.

SIR WILLIAM: That's not the way to serve me, lad. This is no time to look to settle private matters.

Every man's life belongs to the country.

MICHAEL: (SLOWLY) On...which ... side, sir?

SIR WILLIAM: The decision is yours, Michael Cardigan... your choice alone.

MUSIC: CURTAIN

HOST: In 1774 people didn't greet each other with 'Hello' or 'Good day.' They used one of two greetins. In those days you said either "God save our country," which identified you as a rebel; or "God save the King," which made you a Tory. Young Michael Cardigan is soon to be faced with a decision as to which greeting he'll use. We'll find out who and what helps him make this decision when I return shortly.

COMMERCIALS:

MUSIC: THEME AND UNDER

HOST: You're back aboard our twentieth century time machine and now...I snap my fingers...and here we are in Johnstown, New York on a balmy June night in 1774 at the mansion of Sir William Johnson where a ball is in progress.

SOUND: CROSS FADE IN MINUET MUSIC AND HOLD IN B. G.

HOST: Outside the French windows opening on to the lawn, a worried and aging Sir William stand waiting for a report from his young ward, Michael Cardigan.

MICHAEL: (HE'S BEEN RUNNING) Sir William I bring bad news. Quider is gone. Broke away from his hut and ran off into the woods...he's half crazed with fever, but the sentries chasing him didn't stand a chance. He ran like a deer.

SIR WILLIAM: But he must be found, Michael...he must carry my belts back to the Cayugas.

MICHAEL: (GETTING IS BREATHING UNDER CONTROL) I'm afraid there's no chance of that, sir. He's disappeared in the woods. I doubt if any of us can track him and...

SIR WILLIAM: We can try. You're a good woodsman...

MICHAEL: And the doctor says we'll find him dead in some creek or pond because the fever will drive him to seek water.

SIR WILLIAM: The doctor gives him no chance to live, then?

MICHAEL: No, sir...He was very clear. He says there's no hope for him.

SIR WILLIAM: None for him and none for my poor country, I fear.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS FADE ON

BUTLER: (FADING ON WITH THEM) Good evening again,
Sir William.

SIR WILLIAM: Captain Butler I trust that you have some message
for me from my Lord Dunmore else you would not
have the effrontery to face me again.

BUTLER: I do represent Lord Dunmore and I will overlook
your slur upon me because of the importance of
the message I carry.

SIR WILLIAM: And that is?

BUTLER: It has come to Lord Dunmore's attention that an
Indian belt bearer who gave you some messages
has escaped your guards and run off into the
forest. My Lord Dunmore wishes to know what
messages he brought you and what you intend to do
about his escape?

SIR WILLIAM: (COLDLY) I have already conveyed my concern
about the Cayugas to Lord Dunmore and know all
about the foul plot which you and he are hatching.
Any message given to me by the belt bearer is
for my ears only.

BUTLER: (IMPASSIVELY) That's your choice, Sir William,
and I hope that Lord Dunmore and Governor Tryon
of New York will consider it stopping just short
of treason. My own opinion would be quite
different, of course.

MICHAEL: How dare you accuse Sir William of treason?!
By heaven's Captain Butler, I'll...

SIR WILLIAM: You'll hold your tongue, Michael. And you will leave us, Captain Butler.

BUTLER: Sooner than you think, Sir William...sooner than you think.

MUSIC: STING AND UNDER

MICHAEL: It was only Sir Williams grasp on my arm that prevented my from following that smiling devil and challenging him right then and there.

SIR WILLIAM: Michael, Michael. I've told you that's not the way to help me. I've enough troubles without seeing you carried to my house with a bullet hole in your breast.

MICHAEL: (HOTLY) I'm not afraid of...

SIR WILLIAM: No one is doubting your courage, lad. It's your descretion that leaves something to be desired.

MICHAEL: You don't need discretion now, sir. You need action.

SIR WILLIAM: (SADLY) I know, I know...come let's stroll back to the house. I've been too long away from my guests.

SOUND: MUSIC FADES ON AS WELL AS PARTY NOISES

SIR WILLIAM: In all those people, Michael...not one I can trust completely.

MICHAEL: But Sir William, I am forever...

SIR WILLIAM: I know...I know, my boy. I can trust you, but I need a man now...a man of experience.

MICHAEL: You need a man to go to Colonel Cresap.

SIR WILLIAM: You're a shrewd observer, Michael.

MICHAEL: I'm more than that. I know you can't trust your message to paper, nor to a living soul except me. I know what to say to Colonel Cresap. Let me go, sir, please.

SIR WILLIAM: I dare not! Tomorrow Lord Dunmore will set his spies on the Ohio trails.

MICHAEL: They wouldn't dare attack an officer in uniform.

SIR WILLIAM: And what's to prevent a shot from ambush? There are plenty of renegades in Johnstown for hire... desperate men!

MICHAEL: But I know the woods. You, yourself, say I'm a very Mohawk in the woods. I fear no one in the forests, not even if the highway man Jack Mount himself were after me.

SIR WILLIAM: It's not only Cresap who must be reached.

MICHAEL: I could carry belts to the Cayugas and tell the truth about Quider and his party! Then find Cresap and show him the mischief he's brewing.

SIR WILLIAM: And so serve the enemies of the King?

MICHAEL: (QUICKLY) And so serve you, sir.

SIR WILLIAM: (BEAT, THEN) Why are we wasting time standing here when we could be rehearsing the part you're to play for the Cayugas.

MUSIC: BRIDGE AND UNDER

MICHAEL: I couldn't believe that he was really going to send me, but when he made me sit down and make a map for him, noting every ford and carrying place, I realized that it was really so. Then

(CONTINUED)

MICHAEL: (CONTINUED) he went over very carefully with me the part I was to play before the Cayugas. I was proud of myself as I went perfectly through the ritual with the belts until I came to the last, which I spoke of as "red" instead of black. He interrupted.

SIR WILLIAM: Michael! What is "black" in the Mohawk tongue?

MICHAEL: Kahonji.

SIR WILLIAM: And in Onandaga?

MICHAEL: Osuntah.

SIR WILLIAM: And in Cayuga?

MICHAEL: I...I'm sorry, sir. I don't remember.

SIR WILLIAM: Sweandea. And how are you to bear my peace belts if you don't know the difference between the red of war and the black of good intent?

MICHAEL: I should have said 'Hot-Kwah-Weyo -- good red, not war red.

SIR WILLIAM: (LAUGHS DELIGHTEDLY) With such resourceful impudence, you'll never be misunderstood among the Six Nations. Now Michael, we know Lord Dunmore will be sending emissaries to urge Cresap on. You must beat them, lad, and go on foot at that.

MUSIC: BRIDGE AND UNDER

MICHAEL: My first two weeks of travelling through the woods were pure joy. The forests were my element -- where I'd spent my childhood..

SOUND: FADE IN FOREST NOISES

MICHAEL: But on the morning, I first saw the Allegheny range and knew I was on the right trail, I suddenly felt that I was being followed. I quickly stepped off the path and sank down behind a log into a soft ball of buckskin.

SOUND: ACCOMPANY NARRATION

MICHAEL: Lying there to collect my wits and telling myself not to panic I decided to cover my tracks. To that end I stole down to the river's edge...

SOUND: FADE RUNNING WATER IN AND HOLD IN B,G.

MICHAEL: Waded in and deliberately left mcassin tracks pointing to the Fort Pitt trail. Then I walked backward in the water until I spotted a log jutting over the bank, climbed out on the log, and dropped behind it watching the river bank where my tracks showed. I had not long

MICHAEL: (Cont'd) to wait before I saw a man come out on the sandy bank of the stream and kneel down studying my tracks.

MUSIC: STING

MICHAEL: My flesh crawled. The man was Walter Butler, but a Walter Butler who might have been an Indian... shaven scalp, beaded leggings to his hips and a hatchet in his belt. Suddenly two other men came swiftly through the trees and joined him! Then to my horror a canoe swung around the bend and stopped in mid-stream. I recognized the men in the canoe as from Fort Johnson and I did a foolish thing. Standing up, I shouted...

"Go back, you clowns" I recognize you Toby Tice..and you Wraxall! Are you turned Huron then with your knives, hatchets and Seneca belts? Swing that canoe or I'll drill you both with one ball!"

SOUND: SHOT

MICHAEL: It was not I who fired, but Walter Butler whom I'd overlooked. The ball whistled by me within an inch of my head. I sighted for the canoe and fired.

SOUND: SHOT

BUTLER: (OFF AND SHOUTING) Beach the canoe.. beach it, you fools before you lose it altogether.

MUSIC: BRIDGE AND UNDER

MICHAEL: I turned and fled, still confident that with my knowledge of the woods I'd be able to shake my pursuers off...

SOUND: HEAVY SPLASHING IN WATER

MICHAEL: (OVER, PANTING) I stayed in the stream for as long as my aching legs and back would stand it. Then careful to leave no trace of where I'd left the river, I turned off into the forest, after first stopping to change my mocassins. I ran as silently as I could for half an hour, then turned and doubled back alongside the trail, and then veered off and climbed till I reached a plateau where I believed it safe to rest, dry off, and eat a mouthful of corn. I hadn't been there more than a few minutes before...before I realized that my thinking I'd thrown off pursuit was a foolish hope.

SOUND: SINGLE SHOT

MICHAEL: Had I not leaned forward to reach in my pack for another handful of corn, Walter Butler's shot would have killed me where I sat. And then from a rocky point above me, I heard his hateful voice.

BUTLER: (OFF) You won't have to wait a year, Master Cardigan...run as fast and far as you like, rest assured my bullet will find you.

MUSIC: STINGS AND UNDER

MICHAEL: Then I made the unforgiveable mistake.
I panicked and ran blindly...

SOUND: RUNNING FOOTSTEPS, CRASHING UNDERBRUSH

MICHAEL: (PANTING) with no thought of where I was
going...seeking some unknown sanctuary, not
thinking...just running until I could run
no more.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS SLOW AND OUT

MICHAEL: I knew I shouldn't stop and rest, but my legs
would carry me no farther.

SOUND: BODY THUD

MICHAEL: (BREATHLESS) Stand I could not...and worse, I
had no inclination for it. I knew Butler would
find me and kill me, yet sleep was sweeter...
I closed my eyes.

MUSIC: BRIDGE AND UNDER

MICHAEL: When I woke the moon stared at me over a
ghostly wall. Somehow death had passed me
by as I slept. I looked around for my rifle
and found to my horror the flint missing,
charge drawn, and the ramrod sticking helplessly
out of the barrel. As I crouched, looking
around, a giant figure of a man rose from the
bushes at my elbow.

SOUND: NIGHT FOREST SOUNDS

MOUNT: Greetings, friend God save our country.

MICHAEL: What.. how.. who... are you?

MOUNT: Softly, lad, softly. There are some gentlemen

MOUNT: (Cont'd) yonder looking for you.. I sent them south for I somehow suspected you might not be looking for them.

MICHAEL: (ANGRILY) Where's my knife and hatchet?

MOUNT: Slowly, friend. Let's converse on several subjects before you begin bawling for your playthings.

MICHAEL: I don't care for your tone.

MOUNT: Your manners could do with a bit of polish also. I say to you, "God save our country," and you make no reply.

MICHAEL: I apologize. You have done me a service. If you please, return my weapons and receive my thanks. I have far to travel.

MOUNT: Wait a bit my young cock o' the woods. I don't know you yet, but I mean to before you go out strutting on moonlit nights.

MICHAEL: (FURIOUS) You give me back my weapons or...

MOUNT: (NOT AN UNKIND LAUGH) Or what?
Now, lad, come into camp and take supper with me. I mean you no harm. If I did, there's men yonder who'd slit your throat for the pleasure.

MUSIC: ACCENT AND UNDER

MICHAEL: I only remember the giant helping me to a camp fire, bringing me some broth and I fell asleep again. I awoke only when I sensed someone sitting beside me. I whispered.

MICHAEL: I'm awake. Is there any trouble?

MOUNT: Stay hidden in the shadows and away from the fire light. There's a man prowling yonder sniffing our fire. How do you feel?

MICHAEL: Rested, thank you, and fortunate that you found me.

MOUNT: Fortunate, eh? Ever hear of Catamount Jack?

MICHAEL: You mean Jack Mount, the high-way man. But he's not the man who follows me.

MOUNT: And what do you know about Jack Mount?

MICHAEL: Only what everybody knows. He takes the King's Highway. There's a book printed about him in Boston.

MOUNT: With a gallows on the cover, but doesn't 'everybody' say he's a rebel?

MICHAEL: Why yes. He set fire to the King's ship, the Gaspee and started pitchin g tea... (HE STOPS SHORT AS KNOWLEDGE FLOOPS OVER HIM) Why..you.. you're Jack Mount!

MOUNT: (WITH A CHUCKLE) Right, youngster. You've got a belt full of gold, a string of good wampum in your sack and as prett a rifle as I ever saw. Do you still think yourself lucky?

MUSIC: CURTAIN

HOST: Ill-met or well-met by moonlight --- that is the question. Was young Michael Cardigan lucky or unlucky to have fallen into the clutches of the notorious highway man, Jack Mount? We'll have the answer to that and an answer also to which side Michael will take when I return shortly with Act Three.

MUSIC: THEME AND UNDER

HOST: The Allegheny river rises in Northern Pennsylvania and flows south some 325 miles to Pittsburgh where it joins the Ohio. Today it is an easy day's drive, but two hundred and three years ago, when all travelling was on horseback or by foot, the journey took at least three weeks. Michael Cardigan, camped high above the Allegheny was less than forty miles from Fort Pitt, but he wasn't at all sure that he'd ever get there alive.

SOUND: NIGHT FOREST NOISES

MICHAEL: When I discovered that the man who had saved me from Walter Butler was Jack Mount, the highwayman, and that the same Butler was prowling outside the campfire I privately thought little of my chances of reaching Fort Pitt. Jack Mount broke in on my thoughts.

MOUNT: So they say I take the King's Highway, eh?

MICHAEL: That's what they say.

MOUNT: (ANGRILY) I never take a rebel purse! Tell that to the next fool you hear call me a cut-purse! But what of you.. what brings you to the forest?

MICHAEL: I can't tell you.

MOUNT: Won't, you mean. But if I'm a King's Highwayman, you're a King's man and you'll not go free without an accounting.

MICHAEL: (DESPERATELY) If you're a true patriot, you'll let me go my way.

MOUNT: I will, eh? Well, my young firebrand, what about that gentleman who's just strolled into the circle of our campfire giving the peace sign?

MUSIC: STINGS AND UNDER

MICHAEL: My heart sank within me, for the man he referred to was Walter Butler. Motioning me back into the shadows, the huge highwayman, his rifle lying in the hollow of his left arm, strolled around the rim of the fire circle making a well known Mohawk sign that said plainly... "Move and I shoot."

SOUND: NIGHT SOUNDS

MOUNT: Well, Captain Butler, what can I do for you?

BUTLER: (IMPASSIVELY) You know me, sir?

MOUNT: Ay. We all know you, even in your Indian dress.

BUTLER: May I inquire your name, sir?

MOUNT: Certainly you may inquire. You may inquire of my old friend, the moon. She knows me well.

BUTLER: (BEAT, THEN) You unintentionally misled me last evening. The man I follow did not cross the river as you made me believe!

MOUNT: Really?

BUTLER: I'm here on business of my Lord Dunmore. I'm here to arrest a young man who I suspect lies hidden in your camp. I call on you, whoever you are, to aid me in the execution of the law.

MOUNT: The law! She's another acquaintance of mine! I suppose you bring an order from her --- what some people call a warrant?

BUTLER: I do, sir... here! Look at it.

MOUNT: 'Tis the same old order. I've seen them in every one of the thirteen colonies --

BUTLER: Then doubtless, you're a sheriff, sir.

MOUNT: Not exactly a sheriff, Captain Butler, but I've done business with them. I owe them more than I can ever repay.

BUTLER: Then you understand why you should aid the law.

MOUNT: Tell me who this young Michael Cardigan may be, and what he has done to get his name on this warrant?

BUTLER: (SHARPLY NOW) It's a matter of treason. Now have done with your silly chatter and aid me to do my duty in the King's name.

MOUNT: (LAUGHING) In the King's name! Here's friend Butler asking me to take a stout fellow in the King's name. (VICIOUSLY NOW) Do you take me for your servant or the King's hangman?! The devil with you, sir! And the devil with your King!

BUTLER: (A LONG BEAT, THEN EVENLY, DEADLY) I shall take care that your good wishes reach the King's ears. Pray, sir, honour me with your name though I think I've guessed both.

MOUNT: No need to guess. I'm Jack Mount. I burned the Gaspee. I helped dump his Majesty's tea into Boston harbor, and I should be pleased to do as much for the King himself.

BUTLER: So you will not deliver me my warrant and my prisoner?

MOUNT: No! Make a new trail, you Tory hangman! March!

MUSIC: STING AND UNDER

MICHAEL: Never had I seen such ferocity on a human countenance as I saw on Walter Butler's as he backed away from the firelight and disappeared into the brush. After he'd gone, Mount turned to me...

MOUNT: Friend, take your Indian belts, your pack, and weapons and go in peace, for if Dunmore is after you, the sooner you start North the better.

MICHAEL: I go South.

MOUNT: Oh you do, eh? Are you bound for Cresap's camp?

MICHAEL: Are you?

MOUNT: What a troublesome lad you are! Ever answering a question with a question, and I only a little wiser now that I know your name and begin to see the reason for those peace belts you carry.

MICHAEL: (SHARPLY) They're no concern of yours.

MOUNT: (SMILING) You think I don't see this pretty game that's being played here. Sir William will not have the Indians take sides in this war that's coming so fast upon us.

MICHAEL: Hush, for heaven's sake!

MOUNT: But it's no secret, lad. In Johnstown they gossip openly that Butler means to rouse the Indians against us, and that Sir William will not have it.

MICHAEL: (TAKEN ABACK) When were you last in Johnstown?

MOUNT: I left a week after you. We saw your tracks, but we went another way after the first week (MORE)

MOUNT: (CONT'D) You lost too much time.

MICHAEL: Time! I must get to Cresap before I take my peace belts to the Cayugas. I must stop him from driving them into the Kings ranks.

MOUNT: What do we care for the Cayugas? We're not about to give up the frontier and go back to Virginia with our tails between our legs.

MICHAEL: Better that way than serving as tools for Dunmore.

MOUNT: Dunmore hasn't wits enough to twiddle his own thumbs.

MICHAEL: He had wit enough to send Butler to stop me.

MOUNT: Butler came for something else, too. The beautiful Miss Felicity Warren came with Lord Dunmore's party to Pittsburgh and Walter Butler has openly boasted he'll wed her despite Sir William or the devil himself!

MUSIC: BRIDGE AND UNDER

MICHAEL: Felicity Warren was my cousin...a beautiful girl whom I secretly loved. I had never dared to hope she'd wed me when I grew up, but nevertheless such a red rage gripped me to hear her name linked with villain Butler's that I saw Mount through a crimson mist and clenched my rifle so fiercely that Mount noticed and said, If you'd like to join me, Mr. Cardigan I'll guarantee that it will be safer than travelling alone, and although I won't promise it, you might even get a chance to take a shot at Mr. Butler with that rifle (MORE)

MOUNT: (CONT'D) you're squeezing so hard.

MICHAEL: I'll join you gladly.

MOUNT: Then come along! Our friend Butler will be watching for us and we mustn't keep the gentleman waiting too long.

MICHAEL: Hold on. This isn't the way. The Fort Pitt trail lies west by South.

MOUNT: There's a shorter cut to Cresap.

MICHAEL: It can't be shorter than the Pitt trail.

MOUNT: Shorter because it's healthier. Butler will be waiting on the Pitt trail for us. I've no powder to waste on him or his crew, but, Mr. Cardigan, if you want to take a long shot, now's your chance to mark their hides. Come over here...watch your step...because one too many and you'; take a long tumble over the cliffs. Here..kneel down beside me...and look through these bushes-

SOUND: BUSHES BEING MOVED CAUTIOUSLY

MOUNT: There he is....and there's another fellow on that rock outside the stream. Now, Mr. Cardigan you can take a safe shot from here, but it's too far to go for the scalp.

MICHAEL: (STIFFLY) I don't take scalps and I don't shoot from ambush.

MOUNT: Ah well, you're a good lad, so let's leave Butler watching the trail and we'll be with Cresap by next moonrise.

MUSIC: BRIDGE AND UNDER

MICHAEL: And it was in Jack Mount's company that I came to Fort Pitt only to find that Colonel Cresap was not at the fort. He was expected sometime the next day. Mount found me bed and food and then let, telling me to sleep sound. When I woke the next morning there was a message for me to join him at a taven called the Leather Bottle. I was angry with Mount for having left me alone in the barracks, a fair prey for Butler, had he come after me. So, when I arrived at the tavern...

SOUND: TAVERN NOISES,

MOUNT: (CALLING) Over here, lad.. a table by the window.

MICHAEL: (SULLENLY) I had a good mind not to come at all.

MOUNT: Why? What's wrong?

MICHAEL: I thought you were my friend, and a friend wouldn't leave me sleeping in the barracks at the mercy of Walter Butler.

MOUNT: Shame on you for the thought! I don't do things by halves. Friends of mine have been watching Butler and his men all night, ready to warn you the moment they started for the barracks.

MICHAEL: (SHEEPISHLY) Please accept my apologies.

MOUNT: Accepted. How long do you stay here?

MICHAEL: Until I deliver my belts... that will be tomorrow.

MOUNT: I thought you wanted to see Colonel Cresay?

MICHAEL: They said he'd be back today. But I cannot wait any longer.

MOUNT: Have a care when you deal with the Indians.

MICHAEL: You don't know the Indians as well as I do. I fear none of them.

MOUNT: All right, lad, if you must... you must... but I will accompany you to the Cayuca camp.

MUSIC: BRIDGE AND UNDER

MICHAEL: Jack Mount and I moved along the Cayuga trail... broad and plain... and as the sun sank in the west a thread of blue smoke rose in the air. It was the council-fire of the Cayugas. I signed for Mount to stay at my side and we

MICHAEL: (cont'd) advanced slowly towards men who stood as motionless as the pines. In the front stood an older, stern-faced man who was obviously the chief. I halted with upraised hand.

MICHAEL: Peace! Peace... you wise men .. peace to you, also Chief.

CHIEF: Peace... bearer of belts.

MICHAEL: I come to my brothers from Chief Warragh. I come with these belts and before I speak Chief, I wish to tell you of Quider.

CHIEF: I respect my brother who comes from Chief Warragh. I respect also his belts.. but before you speak, belt-bearer, I tell you it is too late.

MICHAEL: What?

CHIEF: (MOURNFULLY) We know this is not the doing of Chief Warragh, but last night nine of our tribe were slain... slain by men of Colonel Cresaap.. nine scalps taken... and this is too much! I tell you now we unbury our hatchets and beat the war drums.

SOUND: TOM-TOMS, INDIAN DRUMS START BEATING AND THROBBING WITH URGENCY.

MICHAEL: (DESPERATELY) Wait, Wait! Please...

CHIEF: Go, belt-bearer.. go.. while I can still keep you safe. Go before our braves start on the warpath to slay.

MUSIC: BRIDGE AND UNDER

MICHAEL: I stood as if tansfixed.. I had failed. Lord Dunmore had triumphed. I don't think I'd have moved had not Mount taken my arm and guided me gently back the way we came, and then suddenly I began to run.. faster and faster...

SOUND: POUNDING FOOTSTEPS

MOUNT: Hold up, lad! Hold up! Listen... can't you hear?! Are you mad lad?

SOUND: SOUND GUNSHOTS FAR OFF

MOUNT: It's war! The Cayugas are crossing the Ohio... and Cresap's men are battling them.

MICHAEL: I'm going to kill Butler and Lord Dunmore, too, that traitor to the King... and to us.

MOUNT: US??

MICHAEL: Yes, us! If it's treason to stop such monstrous crimes as Lord Dunmore's committing, then I'm guilty of treason -- but only against Lord Dunmore.

MOUNT: Lord Dunmore's only doing his duty. His Majesty needs all the allies he can get.

MICHAEL: Do you mean to tell me that Lord Dunmore's setting Cresap against the Indians at the command of the King?

MOUNT: And if he were?

MICHAEL: If you could prove that to me, then I'm the King's enemy to the last drop of blood in my body.

MOUNT: Ay, and I will prove it! But not here... not in the line of fire...

SOUND: RIFLE SHOTS INCREASE IN INTENSITY AND COME CLOSER

MOUNT: We'll find a safer place before I show you what I have to show.

MUSIC: BRIDGE AND UNDER

MICHAEL: We went swiftly back.. not over the plain Cayuga trail, but using byways and paths I wouldn't have known existed. And finally, when we out of the battle zone, safely seated in a small clearing, Mount took an impressive looking piece of parchment from under his buckskins.

SOUND: CRACKLE AND RUSTLE OF PAPER

MOUNT: I show you the commission of Lord Dunmore to Colonel Cresap making him a major-general of militia....

SOUND: RUSTLE AGAIN

MOUNT: And if you read further... here... you can see it says plainly that Cresap is given permission to enlist one thousand Indians to serve under him against the colonists in aase of rebellion.

MICHAEL: But such villainy... I can't believe it.

MOUNT: There's much more.. read on, Michael Cardigan.

MICHAEL: (IN A VOICE CHOKED WITH EMOTION.. READING) You are further authorized to offer twelve pounds sterling for every colonist's scalp taken by these Indian allies of His Majesty.. the KING... (HE STOPS)

MUSIC: THEME AND UNDER

HOST: Our country was founded on the bravery and
 courage of men and boys like Michael Cardigan!
 People who saw clearly the difference between
 right and wrong! Who made a choice between
 good and evil, even though it was a difficult
 choice to make. It was that that made our country
 great and it's true today that the same courage
 will make us strong.

HOST: Our cast included _____

The entire production was under the direction
of Himan Brown. This is Tom Bosley inviting you
to listen for another exciting tale on the
General Mills Radio Adventure Theater brought
to you thru the magic of radio.

MUSIC: THEME